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Leader of the Party:
THE RT. HON. H. W. WEST

Patron:
EILEEN, LADY BROOKEBOROUGH,
J.P.

President:
COLONEL JAMES G. CUNNINGHAM,
O.B.E., D.L.

Secretary:
NORMAN HUTTON
Telephone No. 24601 (3 lines)
& 27606
Telegrams: "Council" Belfast



Mr. Barrington
M. C. Wilson
London.
Solo

UNIONIST HEADQUARTERS

3 GLENGALL STREET

BELFAST BT12 5AE

29th May, 1979.

Dear President Carter,

The increasing interest of the public representatives of the United States in the affairs of Northern Ireland; and the intensifying lobbying of political figures by groups with dubious connections with terrorist organisations, prompts us to write this open letter to the American President, Congress and People. We write on behalf of the frequently silent and long suffering majority of the Northern Ireland population.

The terror, murder and destruction of property perpetrated in Northern Ireland by the so-called military wings of parties with alleged political objectives has horrified the world for almost ten years. The variety of factors causing or contributing to the problems of Northern Ireland whether historical or religious, economic or emotive, have been so distorted by myth and propaganda as not to justify detailed analysis in this letter.

There can be no democratic and just solution to the present situation unless Terror as a political weapon is rendered useless. As a first step towards this goal it is necessary that the President, Congress and Citizens of the United States of America appreciate the basic facts about the use and purpose of Terror in this country.

The Social and Political Effects of the Terror:

The continuance of violence effectively prevents the implementing of any political initiative. Repeated terrorist outrages alienate large sections of the community, perpetuate sectarian fears and prejudices and stifle the required spirit of conciliation necessary for political settlement. Such outrages are often deliberately calculated to provoke retaliation; and attacks on innocent targets such as theatres, restaurants and places of public resort are not mindless but careful and deliberate. While acts of unjustifiable horror have been committed by groups other than the Provisional I.R.A. only the latter have systemised terror for a pre-determined political end. Politically such terror drives support away from moderate parties towards extremism. The frustration of the Protestant population at the seeming inability to end the Terror is fertile ground for political demagoguery and often acts of aimless violence against the largely innocent Roman Catholic population. This, in turn, is used by the Provisionals to justify the continuance of terror, and the necessity of

their role as protectors against the spectre of a Protestant pogrom. The "Catch 22" situation is a recurring theme in the Provisional theory.

The Purpose for the Terror:

Those committed to terror as a political weapon are acutely aware of the necessity for its continuance. Terrorist aims cannot be fulfilled through the medium of normal political structures such as elections. The total failure of the political wings of terrorist groups to achieve any electoral support is irrefutable. Since the normal methods of achieving political power have failed, terrorists aim to make the break down of society in Northern Ireland so complete, that a solution must be imposed on the people from an external power source. The terrorists will demand recognition as the prize for their participation in an imposed political settlement and will obtain political power. The failure of the Provisional I.R.A. to extract such a settlement from the British Government has prompted them to try and cast the United States of America in the same role.

Recent statements by United States politicians about the inability of the British political parties to engender some political initiative are based on a failure to understand the effect of terror on the necessary pre-conditions of stability and conciliation. Such failure is understandable as the British Government also took a long time to learn this particular lesson.

The Justification of the Terror:

Continued terror requires at least some form of arguable justification. Objectives must be chosen which are either so long term as to guarantee they are unobtainable for many years; or such as are in practical terms impossible. Achievement of the objective is not the name of the game, but continuance of terror is. If such objectives are also legitimate and emotional and are shared by respectable people who would not approve of terror, that is a bonus. Examples of such objectives are a "United Ireland", "British Army Out", and the notorious "Dirty Campaign" at the Maze Prison.

The first is clearly unattainable without the consent of the majority of the Northern Ireland population, yet it is an emotional and politically legitimate objective for many law abiding people who are, however, cynically manipulated.

The second objective is impossible in practical terms because of sectarian antagonism generated by terror, and paradoxically the British Army presence is necessary to the Provisionals' campaign, who by their activities secure the continuing presence of the British Army which it is their alleged objective to remove. A cessation of the Terror would result in the almost immediate removal of the British Army from Northern Ireland but that clearly is not what is sought.

The real aim of

the Provisionals would be to secure the withdrawal of the British Army in a prevailing atmosphere of Terror. They would assume the mantle of protectors of the Roman Catholic community which was the original purpose for which the British Army came to Northern Ireland in 1969 at the request of Roman Catholic religious and political leaders. In such a state of unrest deliberate acts of violence against the alarmed Protestant population already roused by its own extremists would provide the predicted attack on the Roman Catholic community as the only identifiable target. Moderate Roman Catholic politicians would be swept aside and the Provisionals would emerge as the effective political and de facto leaders. The third example, the so-called "Dirty Campaign" is a glaring illustration of an artificial objective designed for a specific purpose. The deliberate and voluntary conversion by Provisional I.R.A. prisoners of modern facilities into those of unimaginable filth defies reason; but it is a source of emotional propaganda. Because it is self-imposed the Dirty Campaign could be stopped at any time, but its continuance is enforced both within the prison and the home areas of the prisoners, by threats of withdrawal of financial aid to dependents and the social ostracism of the latter in a closely knit community. Despite the fact that the Dirty Campaign is so contrary to the nature and dignity of man the principle of continuance is paramount. Objectives are not expected to be achieved since achievement removes the justification for terror. The ultimate and true objective of those engaged in terror is the total control of the government of the State without any mandate from the people.

The Financing of the Terror.

The sources of finance of the Provisional I.R.A. are both direct and indirect. The former by means of armed robbery, protection rackets in the areas of which they are the alleged guardians, and interests in illegal drinking establishments. The indirect funding is generally obtained from the United States of America where a traditional anti-British attitude is kept alive in Irish American Associations. The United Ireland theme is cynically canvassed and the Provisional I.R.A. marketed as the 20th century heirs of the Irish Volunteers, the Fenians and the I.R.A. 1916 vintage. Those Irish Americans who would genuinely support a United Ireland but who do not subscribe to violence or to the purchase of arms, are persuaded that donations are for social or welfare work. The representatives of the British Government, the Government of the Republic of Ireland and responsible politicians from Northern Ireland have been unanimous in their condemnation of the supply of money or arms to the Provisional I.R.A. or their front organisations. The increasing discovery of arms of Eastern European origin and the known links of the Provisionals with international terrorism clearly indicate that what is sought is American money but not American Democracy.

The Politics of the Terror:

Those responsible for the promotion of the Terror have not centred on the United States as the external power source for an imposed solution. The choice, to some extent, was dictated by the source of funds, a common language, and the availability of a substantial number of United Ireland sympathisers mainly of Irish Roman Catholic origin, whose appreciation of the modern situation in Ireland is limited, but who are historically and emotionally conditioned to be sold a distorted and inaccurate account of the role and activities of the Provisional I.R.A. Pressure groups such as the Irish National Caucus operating in Washington have openly intensified their lobby of Congressmen and persons of political stature or influence. The information which they provide is deliberately slanted and often inaccurate. The resulting well meaning but often mis-informed and politically naive intervention of some of these figures has seldom helped the situation in Northern Ireland. The names and international reputation of these politicians lend a veneer of respectability to terrorist interests. Such interventions are often deeply resented by those who live, work, and raise families under the shadow of the gunman or threat of the bomber. The law abiding population of this country see the perpetrators of the most ghastly and inhuman crimes made the objects of sympathy and active support; while the growing tally of dead and maimed is the subject of meaningless platitudes. Those responsible for terrorist publicity are quick to present this resentment as an example of entrenched siege mentality and an unwillingness to compromise.

The Answer to the Terror:

Terror can only be eradicated by the total exposure of its aims, purpose and method. The nature of terror must be understood and the sub-structure upon which it depends removed. It must be deprived of financial aid and starved of moral and political support. Those sections of the American people with Irish ancestry and legitimate aspirations for a United Ireland must be properly and accurately informed that the Provisional I.R.A. have a view of a United Ireland which Wolfe Tone, Parnell or Connolly would condemn. Ireland can only be united when the Protestant population of the North willingly and democratically accept it. To attempt to unite Ireland by force or imposition would only secure a transference of the North's tragedy to the whole of Ireland with the roles reversed.

The British Government would willingly withdraw the Army if and when the Terror ceased or even diminished. We do not doubt that the restoration of order and the rule of law to all areas would lead inevitably to a political solution. We do not underestimate the difficulties to be encountered or the problems which will then be faced. We know that the only lasting solution must be created within Northern Ireland by its

own inhabitants.

Settlers from the North of Ireland have played an historic part in the creating of your constitution and in the development of those democratic principles that have made you a great nation. We do not doubt that you will ensure the survival of such principles in this land.

We ask the American President, Congress and People to accept that this letter is written "With malice towards none: with charity for all; with firmness in the right as God gives us to see the right," and an abiding belief that "the ballot is stronger than the bullet".

Yours sincerely,

Harry W. West,

LEADER ULSTER UNIONIST PARTY.

James H. Molyneaux,

PARLIAMENTARY LEADER AT WESTMINSTER.

W. Martin Smyth,

GRAND MASTER OF IRELAND AND ORANGE COUNCIL OF THE WORLD.